

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
MARSHALL DIVISION**

CHELSEA ALEXANDRA NORTON, §
§
Plaintiff, §
§
v. § Case No. 2:18-cv-0352-JRG-RSP
§
COMMISSIONER, SOCIAL SECURITY §
ADMINISTRATION, §
§
Defendant. §

MEMORANDUM ORDER

Currently before the Court is Plaintiff's Petition and Brief for Award of Attorney's Fees Under the Equal Access to Justice Act (Dkt. No. 18), filed by Petitioner on December 19, 2019. The motion seeks compensation for 22.7 hours at the adjusted statutory rates permitted by the Act for 2018 and 2019, for a total of \$4,545.16, inclusive of costs. The Commissioner does not oppose the requested award of fees and costs. (Dkt. No. 19).

The Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA), 28 U.S.C. §2412, allows a prevailing party in litigation against the United States, including a petitioner for Social Security benefits, to recover his attorney's fees "unless the court finds that the position of the United States was substantially justified or that special circumstances make an award unjust." *Id.* at §2412 (d)(1)(a). The Supreme Court has explained that "EAJA fees are determined not by a percent of the amount recovered, but by the 'time expended' and the attorney's 'hourly rate,'" which is currently capped at \$201.80 per hour. *Gisbrecht v. Barnhart*, 535 U.S. 789, 794, 122 S.Ct. 1817, 152 L.Ed.2d 996 (2002). *See generally, Murkeldove v. Astrue*, 635 F.3d 784, 789 (5th Cir. 2011). The Commissioner does not contend, nor does the Court find, that the position of the government was substantially justified or

that any special circumstances exist rendering an award unjust. The Court finds that Petitioner's requested fee is appropriate.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that Defendant will pay Petitioner \$4,545.16 in EAJA fees, which includes any costs. In accordance with the Supreme Court's decision in *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 130 S.Ct. 2521 (2010), this award will be payable to Petitioner, by delivery to her counsel of record.

SIGNED this 9th day of March, 2020.



ROY S. PAYNE
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE